centuries the Ganges has listened to the supplications of her children ! To-day they are repeating a prayer at least 5000 years old. It was composed long ago, when our ancestors first left their early home in Central Asia, and the Eastern branch of the Aryan race has preserved it to this day. So that the Hindu first invokes the Sun as the embodiment of force in Nature, and then he prays to that particular incarnation of the Supreme Being whom he has chosen to guide his life, and lastly to the Universal Spirit, apart from whom, according to his philosophy, nothing exists, and of whom all external things are the manifestation. There are many shrines in Benares, and the most thronged of all is the Bisheshwar, or Temple of the Lord of the Universe. It has a central dome covered with beaten gold at the cost of Ranjit Singh, To reach the temple we have to tread our way through the labyrinth of narrow, tortuous streets, where the high houses nearly meet above, and constantly we pass shrines covered

with exquisite stone-carving. Arrived there,, we are not permitted to enter. Once things were different, and all were welcome to be present at Hindu services. But certain visitors

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